



Transportation Advisory Committee

Date: February 9, 2022

Time: 7:00 PM – 9:00 PM.

Location: Conducted via Remote Participation (Zoom).

Minutes.

1. Administration.

Members in Attendance: Dan Amstutz (DPCD), Bill Copithorne (DPW), Wayne Chouinard (DPW), Lenard Diggins, Ray Jones, Melissa Laube, Jeff Maxtutis, Howard Muise, Tycho Nightingale, Scott Smith, Laura Swan (Chair), and Shoji Takahashi.

Members Absent: Corey Rateau (APD).

Members of Public in Attendance: Petru Sofio and Joe Solomon.

The Chair provided notice regarding Remotely Conducted Meetings, referring the members to the agenda attachment entitled "Governor Charles Baker's 3/12/2020 Executive Order Suspending Certain Provisions of the Open Meeting Law". The Chair reviewed the meeting ground rules and announced that the meeting was being recorded.

B. Approval of January 12, 2022 Meeting Notes.

The Minutes of the January 12, 2022 meeting were approved. Howard Muise commented that the renewal term for Jeff Maxtutis should be 4 years, and Jeff Maxtutis responded that the Letter from the Select Board said 3 years. Len Diggins recommended that the reappointment letter be corrected.

C. Correspondence

- Email from Doug Heim, Town Counsel, regarding TAC Rules for Governance (see Section 1E).
- Email from Doug Heim, Town Counsel, regarding Private Way (see Section 5).

- Laura Swan was reappointed as School Committee Liaison.
- Email from George Stephans regarding Downing Square dated January 24, 2022. Jeff Maxtutis and Howard Muise mentioned past TAC assessments of Downing Square, changes made to the intersection based on those recommendations, and challenges of Downing Square. Jeff Maxtutis will send the Memo of the previous TAC assessment to George Stephans. Len Diggins encouraged TAC to reassess Downing Square.

D. Advertisement for Associate Members.

TAC will place notices to recruit new Associate Members.

E. Vote: TAC Rules of Governance.

Laura Swan, Howard Muise, and Scott Smith worked on revising the TAC Rules of Governance to reflect how the TAC operates presently. Laura Swan contacted Town Counsel Doug Heim inquiring whether non-TAC volunteers serving on a TAC Working Group is legally acceptable. Town Counsel responded that Working Groups can have non-TAC volunteers.

Dan Amstutz added that ABAC and Clean Energy Future Committee also include non-members on Working Groups to assist with the committee's work. Scott Smith concurred and noted that Working Groups do not make decisions for the committee. Non-members should disclose conflicts to the Working Group and committee.

The TAC Rules of Governance were approved unanimously.

2. Public Comments (for information only, not for action).

Petru Sofio observed that flexible delineators placed at Mass Ave and Appleton St are regularly pushed in, away from the bump out. The Traffic Supervisor moves them back each day. A similar situation occurs on Chestnut St. The Town can consider using fixed flexible delineators.

3. Town Issues/Activities (not already on the agenda).

A. Wayne Chouinard provided an update from the Department of Public Works (DPW).

Speed display sign on Lowell St: installed on the approach from Lexington. Programming to-be completed to change flashing mode and LED strobe.

Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacons (RRFB): installed and operating on Gray St at Fountain Rd/Quincy St. Signs need to-be assessed and updated in the area, e.g., installing a school crossing sign. Also, consider removing the striped crosswalk ~40 ft east of the intersection to reduce sign and pavement marking clutter. Jeff Maxtutis responded that he was not in favor of removing the crosswalk. Tycho Nightingale responded that the Traffic Supervisor at Gray St monitors both crosswalks.

B. Dan Amstutz provided an update from the Department of Planning and Community Development (DPCD).

Minuteman Bikeway Planning Project. Existing conditions report is being finalized and will be shared soon. The next public meeting will be in approximately 3 weeks and will focus on waysides and trailheads. Additional money was received for the waysides element of the project allowing for extra time and effort. Also are meeting with stakeholder groups on Bikeway maintenance recommendations and Bikeway policies.

MassTrails Grant project – Mystic River Path to Minuteman Bikeway. First public meeting was attended by more than 100 people. Survey is out now. When it closes, the results will be analyzed and a report compiled. A public meeting is planned for mid-March. In addition, a meeting with a group of residents to assess alternative concepts as part of the feasibility study.

Mass Ave and Appleton St; and Chestnut St. The Town is seeking a consultant for these projects, and contract drafting is more challenging than originally anticipated.

Mass Ave/Appleton St Parking Study. Parking study results, using MAPC analysis of utilization and collection, are being reviewed by the Planning Director. The results will go to the Select Board.

C. There was no update from the Police Department (APD).

4. Liaison News (not on Agenda).

Scott Smith summarized a meeting he attended on the Rt 16 Traffic Calming Coalition. ABAC and the Livable Streets Coalition is also involved, and it is focused on the section of Rt 16 (Alewife Brook Parkway) between Broadway and the Mystic Valley Parkway at the eastern edge of Arlington. Rt 16 Coalition obtained results of the DCR Needs Study, which included traffic counts and volume data (obtained from October 2020 and then adjusted). Sean Garballey attended the meeting.

Three ideas are: (1) Redo the Mystic Valley Parkway rotary; (2) change the Powder House Blvd rotary to a signalized intersection and convert the area to park; and (3) implement a road diet reducing the thru lanes to a single lane.

Petru Sofio recommended that bus priority be included on Broadway, as well as protected left turn lanes at Broadway.

5. Update: Lower Washington St One Way.

In response to Laura Swan, Town Counsel Doug Heim affirmed that TAC can provide advice to the Select Board on statutory private ways, such as lower Washington St. The Town is not permitted to pay for improvements to a private way.

Scott Smith volunteered to redraft the TAC Memo to incorporate comments from Doug Heim and private way. Following a suggestion from Wayne Chouinard, the text of the Memo will refer to “suggestions” and not “recommendations”. The redrafted Memo will be brought to a vote at the next meeting.

6. Park Avenue Corridor.

A. Update: Signal at Appleton St.

Dan Amstutz said that traffic signal analysis for a proposed signal at Park Ave and Appleton St was not included in an RFP for (1) an expanded Mass Ave corridor project to include Appleton St and (2) Chestnut St.

The expanded Mass Ave corridor project extends along Mass Ave from Richardson Ave to Quinn Rd and include Forest St to Peirce St. This analysis is tied to the development of 1165R Mass Ave. Additional assessment will be made along Mass Ave from Lowell St to Burton St to understand the impact on Ottoson Middle School.

The Chestnut St project is the subject of the TAC Recommendations dated May 12, 2021. It will also examine pedestrian access at the intersection of Mystic St and Chestnut St.

However, the RFPs did not include signal analysis at Park Ave and Appleton St. Joe Solomon asked whether any incremental changes could be implemented to improve the situation at Park Ave and Appleton St, and how funding could be obtained to conduct the signal analysis (such as earmarking Federal infrastructure funds to this project).

Dan Amstutz responded that he will bring the question to the Town.

B. Update: Park Ave Pedestrian Improvements.

Wayne Chouinard will change lane dimensions on the drawing to see how far bike lanes can extend down Park Ave towards the Mass Ave traffic signal.

C. Update: MBTA Bus Stops.

Dan Amstutz updated TAC on the MBTA-proposed changes to bus stops along Park Ave and Wachusett Ave as part of the MBTA Plan for Accessible Transit Infrastructure (PATI) Program. Goals of PATI Program include improving bus stop accessibility and improving service.

MBTA will meet with DPCD to rework the proposal to consolidate bus-stop locations. The original proposal was poorly received by the public, particularly residents with mobility impairments, who expressed significant concerns. The MBTA will leave at least one bus stop around Park Circle.

7. Update: Dallin SRTS.

APD and Dallin School discussed MUTCD signs and their placement for the pilot test. Signs and placement will be coordinated with DPW. Jeff Maxtutis noted that winter weather may hinder sign installation causing a delay in the planned starting date at the end of February. Joe Solomon added that DPW presently is strained for time with snow and ice removal.

8. Update: Newland Rd/Summer St Crosswalk

Shoji Takahashi attended a meeting of the Peirce School Council to discuss a possible crosswalk on Summer St. He has received emails of support for a Summer St crosswalk from a number of residents.

One resident recommended a crosswalk be installed at Forest St and Sunset Rd/Aerial St. An MBTA bus stop is located there, and students walk to Peirce from Aerial St.

9. Update: Overlook Rd Traffic Calming

Shoji Takahashi asked TAC to consider traffic data collection near 63 Overlook Rd, with collection to take place in the spring.

10. Update: Bates Rd Left Turn

Bill Copithorne said that he will make evening commute observations after the snow melts. Petru Sofio observed that green bike lane markings on Mass Ave

near Bates Rd are now faded. Bill Copithorne responded that the markings will be refreshed, although other locations are higher priority such as Lowell St.

11. Update: Everett St and Mass Ave

No update.

12. Update: Mt Gilboa Traffic Calming

Ray Jones noted that the speed feedback sign is now installed. He is requesting a speed study on Westminster Ave based on resident feedback for the spring. Also in the spring, he will conduct stop-sign compliance at the intersection of Westminster Ave and Westmoreland Ave.

Residents have remarked to him that they are happy with the RRFB.

13. Update: Thompson Area Traffic Calming

Scott Smith updated that, a few days after the snow storm, he observed gridlock on Everett St. Traffic flow was slightly better on N Union St, because the roadway is wider. He received complaints from the Traffic Supervisor at Purcell Rd and N Union St that snow banks were hindering visibility. In addition, the snow banks force children into roadway to get around them, which then slows automobiles traffic. Gridlock would be reduced if sidewalks are cleared appropriately and snow mounds removed.

Jeff Maxtutis mentioned that DPW in the past had "Priority Corners Maps" for snow removal, which were used to prioritize and coordinate the removal of snow mounds.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:00 pm.